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THUS SPEAKS CHARIJI

Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari

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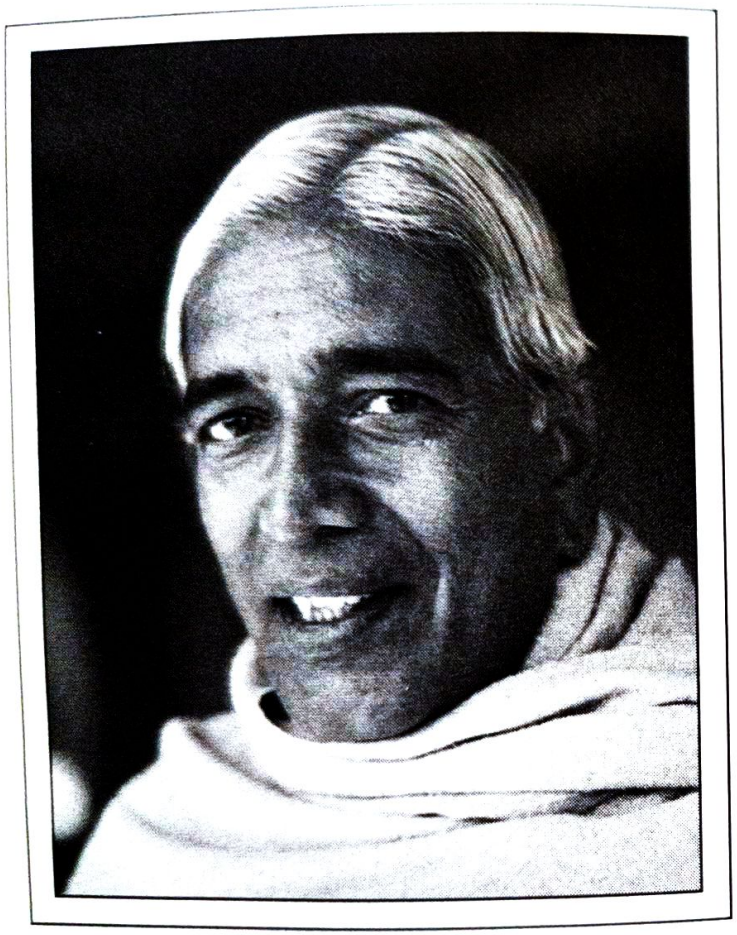
INTRODUCTION

We are very happy to present this book, the third in the *Thus Speaks* series of quotations from the three spiritual Masters of the Sahaj Marg system of raja yoga. The series has been compiled to commemorate the 100th birth anniversary, 30 April 1999, of Babuji Maharaj (Shri Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur), the Founder-President of Shri Ram Chandra Mission.

The release of this series coincides with a time when increasing numbers of people in both the East and the West are turning inwards to solve the great problems of life. Men and women everywhere are discovering the benefits of meditation in their daily lives and realising that a balance between material and

spiritual concerns is essential for our continuing evolution. It is, therefore, to all of humanity that these messages speak, in the universal language of love, acceptance and aspiration for the Highest.

May sincere seekers everywhere gain solace and insight into their inner spiritual selves through these inspiring quotations from Chariji, Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari, the present President and spiritual representative of Shri Ram Chandra Mission.



Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari

About CHARIJI

Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari was born on 24 July 1927 in the village of Vayalur near Chennai (Madras), in the south of India. Known to his family and other close friends as Parthasarathi, he is affectionately called Chari, or Chariji, by many of his associates. His father, Shri C.A. Rajagopalachari, was a railway executive. His mother, Janaki, died when he was five years old after giving birth to his sister, who also died a few years later. His father never remarried, choosing instead to devote himself completely to his responsibilities as a parent and provider.

Because his father's work required frequent relocation of the family, Chariji and his two younger

brothers spent their early years in many different parts of India. They also spent long holidays with their maternal grandparents, to whom they were extremely close. In his autobiography, Chariji remembers his childhood and youth with great nostalgia and writes with much love and affection about the extended family that surrounded him during those years. The loss of his mother nonetheless had a profound effect on the young Parthasarathi, leaving an emptiness that followed him into adulthood.

He suffered more than one serious illness during his childhood and, perhaps as a result, became a voracious reader. He also developed a keen enjoyment of music at an early age and, as a young man, began to study the flute. A talented and passionate student of the instrument, he was encouraged by his teacher to become a professional musician. Sadly, he was persuaded by elder relatives to abandon the idea, and the loss was something akin to a broken love affair which he never quite got over.

After earning a Bachelor's Degree in science from Banares Hindu University, Chariji took his first job with Indian Plastics Limited in chemical engineering. He travelled abroad in this capacity and spent two years in Yugoslavia studying plastics manufacturing techniques. He and his wife, Sulochana, were married in 1955 and two years later had their first and only child, a son, Krishna. It was also in 1955 that Chariji joined the T.T. Krishnamachari group of companies in Bombay, thereafter rising to the position of Executive Director of the Indian Textile Paper Tube Company. His work required him to travel extensively outside of India—in Europe, the Middle East and Africa—and he represented India at the 1957 International Standards Organisation (I.S.O.) conference held in Burgenstock, Switzerland.

Chariji's conscious spiritual aspirations were awakened at the age of eighteen when he heard a lecture on the Bhagavad Gita. He soon took up a detailed study of this book as well as other religious and spiritual texts. At the age of thirty he began Vaishnava traditional instruction in the Hindu religion under an Acharya.

Seven years later, in 1964, he met his spiritual Master—Shri Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur, affectionately known as Babuji—and started the practice of Sahaj Marg meditation.

Chariji received yogic transmission from Babuji, whereby the Master, by virtue of his spiritual attainments, pours divine energy from his own heart into the heart of the aspirant. This ancient raja yoga technique—the essence of Sahaj Marg practice—had been revived and passed on to Babuji by his Master, Shri Ram Chandra of Fatehgarh (known as Lalaji). It was Babuji's conviction that "where religion ends, spirituality begins," and it was under his guidance that Chariji's spiritual journey began in earnest.

While continuing to fulfil his familial and business responsibilities, Chariji was vigilant in his spiritual practice and dedicated to the work of Shri Ram Chandra Mission. As General Secretary of the Mission, he contributed greatly to the publication of Sahaj Marg literature and to the strengthening of the organisation as a whole. Over the years he became Babuji's most

devoted disciple, accompanying him on travels abroad and ably assisting him in his spiritual work.

Babuji characterised the ideal human being as a person having "a Western mind and an Eastern heart," adding that such a person would be needed to guide the Mission successfully into the future. In Chariji he saw this blend of qualities as well as the crucial ability to instil discipline in others (a quality Babuji always felt to be lacking in himself). Babuji passed away in 1983, leaving instructions that Chariji should succeed him as his Spiritual Representative and President of the Mission.

Though bereft of his Master's physical presence and beset by organisational upheaval, Chariji never faltered in obeying Babuji's wishes. After retiring in 1985 from a long and successful business career, he was able to fully dedicate his time to Mission work and the spiritual needs of abhyasis (practicants). His indefatigable spiritual labours have resulted in remarkable growth and expansion of the Mission's activities all over the world, with centres now in Europe, the Americas, the former Soviet Union, Asia, Africa, Australia, and the Middle

East. His book *My Master* is a monumental tribute to Babuji. His other books include diaries of his overseas travels with Babuji, an autobiography and numerous volumes of his talks in India and abroad interpreting, amplifying and representing his Master's teachings.

In Sahaj Marg it is understood that the Master is the greatest servant. Observing Chariji, one sees this principle in action. His entire existence is presently devoted to the cause of spirituality in the service of others, a service which he undertakes with unwavering faith in the divine support of his Master, Babuji Maharaj.

THUS SPEAKS CHARIJI

GOD

God cannot be a person, God cannot be a place, God cannot be a thing. God is said to be, in all religions, without exception, omnipotent, omnipervasive, smaller than the smallest, bigger than the biggest.

God is infinite, and there cannot be any moment in time when you can say, "I have grasped Him."

If God is everywhere, it is a denial of that truth to have to go to a temple to find Him there. If He is in

everything, surely He is in me as much as in that temple. Why not seek Him within me, within my self.

A temple is not where God is; where God is, wherever God is, that is a temple!

My God and your God cannot be different. It is a tragedy—I mean perhaps the greatest tragedy of the human being is that we all say there can be only one God, and yet claim that my God is not the same as your God.

The human race when it evolves has an evolving picture of God, too.

So God, I think, in His ultimate wisdom said, "Let me have no name, because they will fight over my name. Let me have no form, because they will fight over my form."

In all traditions, the divine presence is put in the heart. If God is anywhere, He is in the heart.

The great saints, the great rishis, the great mystics, they gave up the whole existence for something we never see, we never feel, we never touch—**God**.

How to bring God into our lives is the question. The first need, of course, is to recognise that we need Him.

We have lost touch with Him. We have lost the enormous support, inner support, moral support, life support, that He can give us.

It is not that a human being can ever be God, it is not possible, but we can be divinised, so that anything that happens there is resonated in our own hearts.

My Master has stated that God is everywhere and in everything and must therefore be available to everybody. My Master also teaches that God is simple and the means to achieve Him must be simple.

And when people ask how to achieve this God, he says, turn your face away from yourself and there is God waiting for you.

If we are to know or appreciate what God is, we have to experience the Presence of God, not to learn about Him, not to speak about Him, not to be sermonised about Him.

God-realisation and Self-realisation are the same. Because God is the Self.

What we call God or the Centre is nothing but the ıbtlest thing that exists.

God can only be experienced by His Presence, and lis Presence is what we try to experience during our ıeditation.

If you have no feeling that it is your house, but it His house already, then He enters freely.

Seek that Reality, the Reality which is nothing, ʼhich is none of these things, and yet from which verything comes, which is the definition of God.

If we are afraid of God, God realisation cannot ossibly be there.

I consider it the most merciless conception of God, that He can give me one life, expect me to perform and then judge me for it.

Sometimes people say God is a tempter. He tempts us with these gifts. It is we who feel tempted.

We sin; God did not create sin; therefore it is our idea of sin that is responsible for this.

It is the truth of God Himself that no God has ever punished or rewarded anybody. He has given us the opportunity to do it to ourselves.

You cannot compartmentalise God. You cannot assign a specific job or a specific responsibility to God

and say, "God will look after my life in its better aspects. Let me handle the lesser. I will look after my vices. He will look after my virtues. I will spend the money. He will make it for me."

People should be serious about where they are going, and why they are going there, and how they are going there. God cannot be desecrated. Every time we attempt it, we desecrate ourselves. God cannot be cheated. Every time we attempt it, we cheat ourselves. God cannot be lied to. Every time we attempt it, we lie to ourselves. Everything that you do to God, you do to yourself. If you ennoble Him, you ennoble yourself. If you divinise Him, you divinise yourself. If you love Him, that love comes back to yourself.

Be obsessed with God, like a lover is obsessed with his beloved.

Only one in so many billions comes to this way of searching for God by the way of happiness and health and success. All the other billions come through frustrations, sorrow, misery, disease, failure.

Now and here begins the journey of evolution, not day after tomorrow, not after I have had my next marriage and the fun consequent on that. Now and here. This is a door we have to walk through when it is open. It may open once in ten thousand years, once in fifty thousand years, and perhaps never again for eternity. Who knows! Because we need God, God does not need us.

It is Nature's generosity, God's greatness, mercy, that He gives us chance after chance to evolve!

What is God's Grace but God Himself?

If we wish to know what God is, we must be as much like Him as possible.

God did not ask us to be superlatively healthy or superlatively wise. He said "**Be with Me.** Don't worry about what you are, that is a result of the past."

Sometimes I wish God had not been so generous, and had made it compulsory for us to love God. It could have been done.

God cannot help giving to one who goes on giving.

God says, "Balance your existence. Make the two wings level and even I cannot stop you from flying straight."

RELIGION

God did not create religion. God shows you the way. And He says, "I am the Way." Not "Mine is the Way."

How can there be God and He be only for one religion?

All religions are agreed that divine powers come again and again in various places. He who comes as a Buddha once, comes as a Christ in another place, in another time. There is only a change of name, form and geography, not of the essence.

Most religions, while giving out their code of ethics or laws, have only told their people what not to do. Therefore these codes of behaviour can at best be termed negative codes or negative laws, because most of them do not tell man what should be done to attain a better life.

Unfortunately, particularly in established religious systems, we find that very often the goal is lost sight of, and the practice or the formal ritual itself becomes the aim.

It may also be noted that the founders of all great religions have preached love as being the only proper approach to the Creator, and this love, when properly cultivated by religious sentiment and religious practice, was expected to reflect in love for all that is contained in creation. How this has been forgotten, and religions

have had to depend on temptation and fear, is the sorry story of religious decadence.

I humbly suggest that the evolution of religion has lagged behind the evolution of man whom it is supposed or expected to serve for his vital inner spiritual needs.

I am not suggesting, or nobody has suggested, that religion should stop. Religion should evolve, you see, like I evolve, you evolve, like my child evolves.

We lack religious spirit. We have a lot of religion but no religious spirit.

One turns to religion, to God, or to a Guru, precisely because there is no one else to whom we can turn.

If you look to the founders of all religions, they all meditated.

Any religion in the world says the same thing, "Seek within."

Religion enforces an externalisation of the mind in man's search for God. Mysticism or spirituality internalises the search and directs the mind to the heart of man where the search really should commence.

In fact all spiritual traditions speak of religion as the kindergarten through which we have to pass.

The whole question of religion is not what we preach, not what we read. It is not by praying you are

going to get anything. It is by doing something about your own evolution that you can get something, achieve something, most important, become something.

Where religion ends, spirituality begins. Where spirituality ends, Reality begins, and where Reality ends, then commences that stage of the ultimate existence which for the lack of a better word he calls Bliss. Now it is clear from this that religion has to have a definite end in the pursuit of our goal.

SPIRITUALITY

Spirituality says that God is not a particular presence tucked away in some corner of the universe in what you call a heaven. God, by very definition is omnipresent, He is everywhere at all times.

Spirituality seeks to remove all this petrifaction that has crept into religious practices, the loveless rituals, bring back love for God, which is synonymous with love for the self.

Now we teach, or at least our religion teaches, that by being trained to worship God outside us and reaching perfection in that form of worship, we must then advance to the next stage which we call spirituality, where we start worshipping God inside us, the immanent Deity. This is mysticism, which we call Yoga in the East.

Now when we come to spirituality, which has also been called by the name mysticism, we find that highly developed persons have come out of all those religions, the mystics of those religions. They have all been able to escape or graduate out of their religions.

Spirituality gives us Love—Love of God, for His sake, to become one with Him, as an act of Love.

So spirituality you find at the peak of all religions. You have the Sufis, you have the Christian mystics, you have the *rishis* of India all telling you the same thing—

look within. And how to look? Not with these eyes. Close your eyes; look into the heart. Seek to re-establish contact with that eternal presence that has always been there, but which we have denied by looking for it outside.

Spirituality is supposed to concern itself with the soul, just as education is with the mind, physical exercise with the body and achievement with the ego. So the whole idea in the spiritual practice/spiritual life is to progressively refine ourselves while in this physical existence.

Spirituality is not a progress, or a search or travel in time. It is travel in eternity.

Spirituality has no instruments of temptation or fear. Spirituality says very bluntly, "If you are afraid of anything, it is really yourself you are afraid of, not of

something out in the darkness, or in the jungles. Change this and you have nothing to be afraid of."

The greatest truth of spirituality is, "Cut yourself free from the past." All of the past.

In spirituality there is only one problem, and that is yourself, and every problem that arises on your path is from inside yourself.

In spirituality, we don't need the body, the mind, the brain, the intellect. They are useful, but the thing that we need is the heart.

When we come to yoga, or to put it another way, when we come to spirituality, there is very little that can be taught, in the sense that knowledge is passed on.

Much of it, if not all of it, concerns the deeper levels of existence where only experience is possible.

In spirituality, the word success doesn't feature at all. It's not in our dictionary. So where there is no success, there is no failure also, because success and failure are opposites. In spirituality we deal neither with success nor with failure.

He alone is spiritual who seeks the Ultimate consciousness or the Godly consciousness in himself, and strives to unite his personal individual consciousness with that Ultimate consciousness. This is spirituality.

All spiritual endeavour is the pursuit of an inner way to achieve the definitely predetermined goal of inner development of the self to its perfect state, the Divine state, the perfect human state, the state of cosmic or Supercosmic or Universal Consciousness.

What is the norm that should exist in the spiritual world? It is neither oneness nor separateness, but the unity of all existence.

So spirituality, in some way, answers this need to find harmony with others and harmony with one's own self. The truth, the fundamental truth, seeming to be, "If you are not balanced with your inner self, at harmony with yourself, you can never be at harmony with the external world."

Spiritual practice is the only possible way of changing the heart in such a way that there is a lasting change in human character.

There can be no spirituality without morality.

Any fool can see your wealth, your strength and your intellect, but there are few today who can recognise a spiritual man if he is walking on the road.

So, the whole mystery of spirituality according to me is, that a person is needed to first of all make us capable of love; second, to attract that love toward himself; third, disappear from the scene, so that the love can exist, even when he does not exist. This is the final test.

So this is the great truth about spirituality, that when we achieve the highest condition of the Master Himself, literally it is as if we have nothing! But without it, we cannot continue to live.

The goal of spiritual life is not a pain-free existence. It is not a pleasure-free existence. It is not something morbid, in which we have to be always suffering. It is not morbid that we want to die, and liberation should not be a way of escaping from this life. But it is a love affair in which there is always pain. Because the greatest source of pain is love.

I would say that no honest man, living an honest life, pursuing an honest objective, can ever find spirituality incompatible with his daily existence.

Don't ignore spirituality for material life, don't ignore the material life for the sake of spirituality.

Give up all that which is standing in your way and you find spirituality is as easy as breathing.

This again spirituality teaches us. Go into the inner self of yourself. Don't look at yourself in a mirror, don't evaluate yourself by your intellectual progress, and by the degrees that you get or the Nobel prize that you are going to win. Go inside, go to the roots of yourself, roots of your existence and see from there where this flowering is going to happen at the end.

It is my conclusion that no amount of research into the field of material science, whatever be the discipline, can ever lead one to spirituality.

In life there are no optional subjects and spirituality is the most non-optional subject of all. It **has** to be done.

Spirituality says. "If you go with this, with the head, you are dividing yourselves. Go with the heart and you find we are all united in one grand, great

family worshipping the One who is in all of us. And His presence in us makes us all brothers and sisters."

When we want one humankind, one humanity, one world, perhaps one universe someday, we have to find the uniting factor, not the dividing factor! And that is what I think spirituality is all about.

So spirituality emphasises that, like anything else, change must be brought into our existence now, by ourselves, under the guidance of somebody if you choose or independently if you choose. But always the moment is **Now**, always the place is **Here**, wherever that may be.

So spirituality says. "While there is still time, while you are still alive, while you can still wake up and walk, for heaven's sake, refer to the heart! Take up the study and the practice of one side of your life which you have totally excluded from existence—the inner life."

RAJA YOGA

Raja Yoga has unfortunately been translated by many persons, eminent ones, too, to mean the way of kings. It does not mean anything like that. It means king among yogas. That is, it is the kingly path, that which is at the highest level of practice.

It is one of my Master's basic teachings that everything originates in the mind. Nothing originates from the physical system. What is born in the mind as an idea becomes a thought; what emerges as a thought goes further to end in activity. Activity gives us feedback information and the whole process is repeated again and

again. So raja yoga directs work on the point of origin, the mind.

Raja yoga focuses upon regulating the mind, because the mind is the thing through which the soul occupies, in a sense, and works through, in another sense, the physical system it has created for its own purpose. It is like the steering wheel in a car—if it doesn't function, it's no use; you can be crashed. Therefore, essentially, in raja yoga we deal with the mind. We meditate. We use the mind to educate the mind itself, to train the mind itself. I am the student, I am myself the teacher; I am what I am teaching it—the Master is an aid.

Essentially yoga is nothing more than converting the work that we use to acquire things, to work upon ourselves to become something, not necessarily a saint, because that is a destiny reserved for those who can work upon themselves with such a devotion and such

an exclusive dedication to their own perfection, that it is probably not possible for all. But like anybody can become a graduate, anybody can become a spiritual person, if not a saint, at least eighty percent of a saint.

Raja yoga means precisely that—using the mind and its powers to achieve what we have to achieve.

Raja yoga says, "It is in the mind that everything originates—first as a thought, then as an action."

My Master says that mind is what destroys us but mind alone is what can regenerate us into the spiritual welfare and spiritual well-being of communion with the Ultimate.

Raja yoga in its purest form excludes physical objects of meditation. The object of meditation must be limited to the formless, attributeless, abstract Ultimate.

We bring our hearts into prominence, allow them the kingship—which is what I think raja yoga really means—hand over the throne to its rightful occupant. "Let the heart take over, let it be the king, let it be the ruler of my existence, let it be the guide which will guide me into all directions wherever I have to go, whatever I have to do."

GURU

In a sense the guru, for that is how we call the spiritual guide in the Indian tradition, is the bridge from here to the hereafter; from this human life into the eternal spiritual existence; from this mundane world to the Brighter world.

The Ultimate guru or Master is only God. But there are people who function under the direct guidance of God, using the power of God. So they function in His capacity, but they don't function as God.

The temple embodies a fixed tradition while a guru embodies a moving, changing, evolving tradition.

In India we recognise three types of masters. One is like the hen which lays an egg and must sit on it to hatch it out. That is, physical contact between the master and the disciple is necessary, without which they cannot interact on each other. The second type of master is like the fish which lays its eggs in the stream and goes round and round them, keeping away marauders. That is, there is visual contact. So without at least visual contact, such masters cannot interact with their disciples. The third and highest is supposed to be like the tortoise which goes on the bank, lays its eggs in a shallow pool, covers it up with sand, goes back into the river and mentally looks after it—by transmission or whatever you may call it. So we recognise basically three types of masters, the hen, the fish and the tortoise types. To which class a particular guru conforms is something that you can decide for yourself.

If the doctor is the doctor of our body, a capable guru is the doctor of the soul.

Knowing that a way does exist is not enough, because on the way many things can happen. So our need is not just for a way, but for somebody that can take us on that way. For this, yogic literature specifies a guru, what we call a Master, as a factor which I consider to be of paramount importance.

Who can be a Master? My Master says, "Look for one who can guide you to the highest. Don't be satisfied with anything less than that." Such a guide alone knows the way, having travelled the whole way himself. You may call him Master, Yogi, Saint, or anything else, but he remains a guide, whatever else he may be to us, and for himself.

Now here is what my Master says in one of his books: "If you cannot find the right guru, it is better to be without a guru. There can be no substitute for the right guru."

A guru is to be used to liberate you, not in some esoteric idea of liberation in which you shall be in a permanent state of beatitude, but perhaps to do further work to liberate others. I am always reminded of my Master's most beautiful example of a prisoner in a jail. The warders are also in the prison. But one is free, one is bound. And at one moment the warder puts you in the prison and locks you up. When the order comes to release you, he himself comes and opens the door and lets you out. So God is the one, always, you see, but if I, by my actions, have, what shall I say, deserved to be imprisoned—I imprison myself.

It is said in the Hindu tradition, I think by Kabir, that God locked Himself into the human heart and gave the key to the guru and said, "When I am fit to be released, come and open this lock."

So when Masters come to us, it is the Almighty Himself who comes to us. It is in a form which we can recognise, in a form which we can learn to love, from which we can receive our teachings.

It is clear that without the help of an external force—you may call him a master, or a guru, or anything you like—the removal of the burdens of the past is impossible by our own effort.

So spiritual law says: Wait in your home, pray to the Ultimate and say, "Please, I am in this mess which I have created myself. I do not know how to get out of

it. Send me somebody to help me." That somebody comes in the shape of a Master, the guru.

It is not enough to have a Master. It is vitally necessary to internalise His presence within us, to seat him upon the throne in our hearts from where He can guide the course of our existence to its destination.

It is significant that in Sufism the Master is called "Friend"! The Guru or Master is indeed the sole friend that we have.

A guru may be capable of loving you like a mother. He must be capable of disciplining you like a father, must be capable of instructing you in spirituality, looking for your progress, guiding you to the destination.

Guru shall always remain obscure, unknown to the public. So it is **duty** to seek them out.

The Master is an object of possession of which a true abhyasi [practicant] can never be dispossessed. The Real Master is something other than the physical Master we perceive. This Real Being is indestructible and eternal. Once we possess Him, we can never lose Him. It is up to us to tie Him to ourselves so closely that we can never be parted from Him unto all Eternity.

MEDITATION

The correct definition of meditation is to think constantly of something.

You become that on which you meditate. Think of God, you become God. Think of stone, you become a stone.

The process of meditation is nothing but trying to renew that contact which ever was and shall be within me. We are not creating divinity. We are not bringing

in new divinity, you see. We are trying to awaken that divinity within us.

Meditation is an instrument for the purification of the mind and its preparation for communion with the Ultimate. That is, meditation is a means to an end, not an end in itself.

So it is not enough to be a human, it is necessary to be conscious. And how is that consciousness going to come unless we meditate and realise that it is so? Therefore, you see, meditation is the only and sole method of self-realisation.

The only thing that the process of meditation is really meant to teach us is to remind us that there is something above from which we have come here and it is our business to get back where we belong.

It is important to remember during meditation that the process is entered into for the purpose of realising one's goal. This makes the process highly dynamic.

My Master says that meditation is the process that leads to the result which is concentration.

Meditation makes us get an enormous degree of regulation over our own minds and it becomes an instrument for revelation. When our meditation is successful we have complete control over our minds. We can apply it where we choose.

By meditation, if we are able to exclude such thoughts without fighting them, without attending to them, then the mind achieves a state, a state of

existence, a state of being, where a single thought alone can exist at a time.

Meditation is the most important activity if we want to discipline ourselves.

It is not very important how we sit, or in what position we sit, so long as we can sit in that position for the length of time specified for our meditation.

We sit comfortably, close our eyes, meditate until we are so deep, there is no more feeling, there is no sensory feeling, there is no auditory feeling, there is no tactile feeling, there is no visual feeling, and we are merged with that immensity of bliss which is inside, which is my own Self.

Remember that when you meditate you are with God.

It is a human weakness to imagine that we must prepare ourselves for meditation. Meditation itself is a process which prepares us to receive the grace of the Almighty through preparation of the mind, conditioning of the mind, regulation of the mind, because the mind is the most potent thing that we have. The mind either ruins us or the mind makes us.

We need to discipline the mind, we need to be exposed to the Divine in us so that by that exposure, little by little, day after day, we lose our fear of Him.

Nobody tells you you are powerless. We are telling ourselves that we are powerless. The cause is the overactivity or the hyperactivity of the mind which is indulging in so many fantasies, but not resting upon itself. And this is the secret of meditation: that we bring this hyperactive mind to rest, a state of total rest which

becomes *samadhi* [state of original balance]. And then you find the power of the Original Mind is now becoming manifest within itself, not to be used or misused, but just to be aware that it exists, and to be used by turning it upon yourself for your own ultimate spiritual release from this world. And for the further stages of spiritual evolution which we call realisation, *layavastha* [mergence], etc.

We find that at the base of all religions is the existence of God, and we also find that at the summit of all religions is the same God. It is in between that religions diverge and teach various ways of approach to the Ultimate; but the beginning and the end being the same, we should try to follow this mystic path and seek the deity within ourselves, and the way, as I have already stated, is meditation.

In meditation the adoration is therefore directed to one's own heart, to the Divinity present therein; and by

this act of transcendental worship the divinisation of the human being in whom such a seed has been sown, is made possible, progressively and rapidly, to culminate in the ultimate achievement of total divinisation of the person.

However much we may practise meditation, you know, however seriously, however dedicatedly, the real spiritual benefit will elude us until we give our heart.

Once you have decided that your heart says you must meditate and go to your spiritual destination, to deny that inner call is spiritual suicide.

When we sit and meditate, one hundred or two hundred people, it has much more capacity to draw the Divine towards us, than when one person meditates. Combined effort is much more than the multiplication of individual effort.

PRAYER

I would therefore define prayer as a call from nature within to Nature outside for the fulfilment of a need of which the self is not consciously aware.

Really, prayer should be done only when something exceeds our capacity to do something. Until human capacity is at its limit, prayer has no meaning, it should not be used. Otherwise, it is either a sign of laziness or of a lack of understanding of God's place in this universe.

Prayer must come from the depths of the heart.

"Then what is prayer?" I asked Master. He said, "You must just have your hands stretched out with a beggar's bowl in it; you should not be aware that you are begging; you should not be aware that you have a bowl in that hand; you should not even be aware if something is put into it."

Our Master has often said that "Prayer is begging, whereas meditation is receiving."

Momentary prayer which can give momentary peace, is a very great blessing.

Prayer must become something like the background of your existence when every heart beat becomes, not a prayer, but an utterance of your gratitude for the existence that He has permitted you to lead.

SADHANA

The whole purpose of sadhana [spiritual practice] seems to be, in some way, to prepare ourselves in such a manner that we draw His Divine gaze and attention towards ourselves so that we can become deserving of His Gift. It is always a gift. It is my conviction that at no level of sadhana can we say, "I have got by my effort." It is not possible.

Sadhana is the foundation; without the foundation there is no house.

The mental attitude of the disciple in undergoing the prescribed sadhana is more important than the sadhana itself.

The mind should be regulated by our sadhana; and this can be possible only by the initial discipline of applying it to meditation.

In our meditation we are required to keep the goal constantly before us. The firm idea that we are moving towards the goal is a very necessary one. It is this that makes our sadhana a dynamic process.

Spiritual practice, the sadhana that we talked about, is nothing but digging inside ourselves in a way, in a sense, and all the refuse that we dig out of that is the same things that are called samskaras, grossness, impressions which have covered the water over, the

water of spirituality, the water, the well-spring of Divinity which is covered under this grossness.

Sadhana we have to do, but for the Master's sake, and not believing that sadhana will give us something, but that sadhana will make us fit to receive His Blessings which He must give me. So the whole process of sadhana is to make the heart full of love.

LOVE

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The founders of all great religions have preached love as being the only proper approach to the Creator, and this love, when properly cultivated by religious sentiment and religious practice, was expected to reflect in love for all that is contained in creation.

Thus slowly, as love matures, it must widen in scope until ultimately it envelops the entire universe within its sublime embrace.

In a sense all yoga is based on this creation of love, and this love manifests itself initially as a longing to reach our goal, or as a craving.

It is only in a spiritual family that we can have love united with discipline; where we can have love with arguments; where we can have love with differences between ourselves; where we can have love uniting people of many races, many tongues, many professions—because there is the silk thread of love that runs through us and holds us together!

Love makes morality possible. Love makes ethical living possible. Love makes pursuit of the goal possible, notwithstanding all the problems that we have to face on the way, the so-called privations that we face, the deprivations that we suffer.

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Love is not for enjoyment. Love is an ennobling force, an elevating force, an evolutionary force. And when you use it in a depraved, profane way, it ceases to be love and it turns into its complementary four-letter word 'lust'.

So love which depends on physical form, physical presence, physical aspects of existence, is a transitory love. But true love exists beyond eternity, because the presence is unnecessary for it.

It is love that begot us; love nurtured us through the initial years of our life; love strengthened and fortified us as we grew into adulthood; love makes life possible thereafter, and brings into our life a flowering and fragrance that warms our heart and cherishes us and fortifies us to face life to its very end. Every one of us participates in this divine play of love. In a sense each one of us is a tiny rivulet given birth by love.

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By surrendering the love that we receive, we keep uninterrupted the cyclical flow of love. Thus a cycle of love is established by which we derive increasingly more and more of the love that we surrender to Him—provided we do not selfishly treasure the love that we receive and lock it up for ourselves in our little hearts in miserly fashion.

This love for the Divine Master is something which does not have to be expressed in tears of anguish on separation or tears of joy on reunion, but wherever the Master be, it continues to quietly simmer in the heart of the abhyasi who is now the lover longing for union with the Beloved.

Love alone can act, breaking the barriers of space and time.

The desire to love and be loved would appear to be far stronger than the desire for the material things and pleasures of life. In this lies the real danger of seeking for it below.

Please understand that love doesn't exist where sacrifice doesn't exist.

So true negation in that sense is where a person becomes love, he no longer loves; she no longer loves; the person himself becomes love.

It is my samskaras that love or hate. When these are removed, then I become capable of loving as myself for the first time.

We cannot love an abstract thing. We need a concrete thing to love. But once you have perfected your love for the concrete, the concrete disappears, the love exists.

Love doesn't mean anything—Love **is**.

There is nothing to be **done** in loving.

We love Him so that we may love ourselves.

So this is the secret of spiritual sadhana and spiritual progress—that if the link with the Master is maintained unbroken and the fire or the flame of love is kept fed with renewed impulses of devotion, that love alone is enough to bring us up to the goal, because His reciprocal love starts flowing.

When the lover, the beloved and the love cease to exist, there is only something which you don't know what to call now, because even the two who have become one, have lost their individual identities.

Discipline backed by love is never felt as discipline.

It is love that should govern the whole Universe. Now when this love is lacking, everything else goes *phut*. It is as if the base has been removed from something, and everything collapses.

The only true way of creating a sustained, sustaining, self-sustaining, ever-pervasive love, which can transcend the barriers of even mortal existence and go with us to the hereafter, is to bring the source of love into our heart.

When we love Him who loves all, we love them whom He loves.

One thing alone is sufficient: try to love. Generate that love for the Infinity, for the Divine, for God, Master, whatever you may call it, in your heart.

I then had a glimmering of an idea, a sort of timid realisation, of what Divine or Universal Love really is. Such a love pervades everything in the Universe, because such a love does not need any qualities, or characteristics, to love, and it therefore exists independently of all qualities in the beloved—good, bad, indifferent!

As gravity attracts in the material plane, similarly love attracts in the spiritual plane.

This is the great spiritual truth, that we see in nature what is inside us. So when we bring hope and love back into our existence, into our hearts, it automatically spreads to all humanity and they begin to hope and to love.

When we become givers with the heart, this miracle happens, you see, that the more you give, the more you get to give. So the only way to get is to give, not from your pocket, but from your heart. Give what you can, give what you have. It may be a moment of assistance. It may be a word of advice at the right time to the right person, which may even save a person from committing suicide. And once we start doing this, you will find that that love itself grows in such a way that it becomes a yoga. Because, now I and my heart are one.

Once we love, we love forever. It should apply to human relationships. It should apply even more to the divine relationship.

At the highest level the identity between the lover and the beloved should dissolve. And when that does not happen, what is love?

At yet higher levels, at spiritually elevated levels, love cannot be personalised any more. It is no longer that one can say, "I love you," to an individual, or even to a group of people, but a person is transformed into love itself.

And you have all heard of the stories where a house is burning, and the mother runs in to bring her child out. What makes that bravery, that courage, possible? Only love. If the love is not there, who cares for that child? And this love has to be so much enlarged, so much universalised, that eventually there is a sort of a

resonance between your heart and the big heart that we call God.

Love is the heart's response to what the heart alone knows it has received.

Knowledge takes us outside, love brings us inside.

Yogic knowledge goes deeper than all these levels of knowledge. In fact it goes to the ultimate level of loving God, which is only another way of saying that we know God. We really know only that which we love. So love would appear to be an absolute precondition to true knowledge, to enduring and deep knowledge of the object sought to be known.

People want today to get fulfilment in love. They want to get in love. They cannot. It is against the law of

love, it is against the nature of love, it is against the divinity of love. One who loves has to give, not to take. It is impossible to take from it.

God—no mind, no heart—cannot love human beings, and cannot love anything else. He is love, but he cannot love. We, on the other end of the spectrum—we can love, but we are not love. Therefore comes this, you know, blindingly illuminating concept that we have not to love, but to become love.

Without love we think of ourselves. With love, we think of everybody else.

The only real love which can act without breaking another heart is the spiritual love.

A beautiful example of the unification of the three principles: that only by doing can we know; only by knowing can we love; only by loving can we achieve or become.

Similarly, your love must expand and expand until you find, as Babuji said, this little tiny human heart must become a universal heart. When all the beings of this universe are within that heart, now whom will you hate, whom will you love? There is neither now. So all this question of loving and hating is only in the duality of existence. Ultimately everything fades. Then only He exists in each one of us thinking that "I exist". Eventually that too goes.

PEARLS

What is Yoga? As you are all no doubt aware, yoga comes from the Sanskrit root *yuj*, which means to yoke or unite, and the term was applied to those sciences and arts which were created as a means of uniting man with his Ultimate consciousness which may be called God, the Creator, the World Spirit, etc.

In yoga there are two elements. There is the self and there is the goal. These two are absolutely essential, because without us there is no goal, and without the goal there is no need for yoga.

When we start meditating, and if you are serious about it, and if you go about it properly, you must achieve this separation of the real self, the inner self, from this mundane self, which is but a machine run through the five senses under the control of the mind with an intellect supposed to guide it. This is precisely why people are not able to change, because the will is lacking. The intention is there, but until the samskaras are cleared off, for which you need an external agency to help you, there is no chance of an individual ever changing his or her life—be assured of this—the chances are absolutely zero.

What is the fear in us of surrender? Surrender only means letting go of this egocentric hold that we have upon this material existence, thinking it to be ours, thinking that we have the ability to control it, direct it, regulate it, when we have none of these abilities, and

letting a superior power take charge of it, and saying, "Lord, I cannot do it, you do it for me."

So progress means:

1) willingness to become what I have to become;

2) subjecting myself to the forces that are going to help me;

3) avoiding all that is going to pull me back.

Bhakti yoga: It is a mixture, not exactly a mixture, but a co-operation of two different streams. Love and what we should call the craving or aspiration for elevation to the level of the Master or God. I think in English you can say it is something like a worshipful attitude, or an attitude of adoration. And therefore the heart is very much involved in *bhakti*.

The *bhakti* path very definitely states that our love belongs to God.

A *bhakta* is one who loves God, loves Him absolutely, loves only God.

A drop of water with devotion, a leaf of a tree with devotion, a fruit, the tiniest flower that you can pick from the grass, bring it with devotion. I will accept it, the Lord of the universe says. What else can you give him.

We receive only to give. In this giving is the true destiny of the spiritual aspirant.

The Divine force, when it flows, it does not know it is flowing; we do not know we are receiving; but that grand miracle of union has happened. This is true yoga.

What symbolises a spiritual person, what characterises a spiritual person—it is his ability to wait. When we wait—He gives.

No more disturbance, no more annoyance, no more greed, no more lust, you know, everything you look at is wonderful. And it is said that is the condition when God from within you looks at His own creation, and wonders at His own creation.

After the suffering and pain comes the lightness.

Every time we sit in meditation and we go deep into it, we come out new—renewed, you can say. That is why meditation is refreshing. That is why meditation is never exhausting, you know, however deep you go into it you come out fresh. Pains are gone, aches are

gone, more of the heart—which is a very great need. There is solace derived from ourselves, from within ourselves, by ourselves. So we see that, in a very real sense, we are becoming independent of the universe. We seek no solace outside, we get it from inside. The others take renewed strength from outside, we get it from inside. Then we find the ultimate experience, that within me is the universe.

Turn within. All knowledge, all powers, everything is within. Your destiny is within, your future is within, the Ultimate is within.

Sahaj Marg is a system of practical and effective training in spirituality. It is a method of raja yoga (yoga of the mind) adapted and simplified to suit the needs of contemporary life.

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